

# Wykeham Benefice News

February 2022



**Congratulations** to Isabel Boycott and her husband Oliver Prior who exchanged their marriage vows to each other at St. Peter and St. Paul's Church, Swalcliffe on New Year's Eve. What a wonderful way to end 2021 and start anew in 2022.

## Mirror in February

The day dawns, with scent of must and rain,  
Of opened soil, dark trees, dry bedroom air.  
Under the fading lamp, half dressed — my brain  
    Idling on some compulsive fantasy —  
I towel my shaven jaw and stop, and stare,  
    Riveted by a dark exhausted eye,  
    A dry down turning mouth.  
It seems again that it is time to learn,  
In this untiring, crumbling place of growth  
To which, for the time being, I return.  
Now plainly in the mirror of my soul  
I read that I have looked my last on youth  
And little more; for they are not made whole  
    That reach the age of Christ

These opening two verses from the Dublin born poet Thomas Kinsella, have been described as being beautifully reflective in the way that they describe the moment that the man stands in front of the mirror and sees not just the image of the present but also of the past. The young man he once was is not looking back at him anymore and the time of his youth will no longer return. On a February morning he stands in front of the mirror and reflects upon his life, but the man only sees himself from his own perspective. He cannot fully see what others see as they look at him or what lies ahead.

I can't quite believe that I've been here as your Rector now for just over a year, so much has happened. We have all lived individually and together as villages and communities through difficult times but also there have been many times and occasions of joy. As we enter into February 2022 it might be a good time to take stock and reflect, to look at ourselves in a metaphorical mirror, acknowledging of course we only see what we can see and maybe sometimes what we want to see. In my own case I might not always acknowledge that I can see an ever increasing amount of grey hair appearing on my head.

Whatever we might physically see, what we can't of course see is what lies ahead, but we can influence and effect greatly our lives going forward: what might be now truly important to us, how might we have been effected both physically, emotionally and spiritually by what we have lived through, how might this time have affected us to refocus our lives in the future?

Whatever answers might come to you to these questions, be assured that every day I hold you and everyone who lives and works in our villages in my daily morning prayers. If ever you would like to talk with me confidentially about any worries,

concerns or upset, or anything which you think I might be able to help you with in the year ahead, then please do just be in touch.

Best wishes & prayers  
Revd Neil

## *Village News*

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### **Broughton**



We enjoyed two events at St Mary's House in Broughton just before Christmas.

On 27<sup>th</sup> November, a coffee and cake sale raised £135 for St Mary's Church. Thank you to everyone who came along to support this.



Then on 7<sup>th</sup> December, a social evening took place organised by the PCC. This was a lovely opportunity to get together.



A joyful carol service and a crib service took place in December. Revd Neil attended and said prayers at the Christingle service at Bishop Carpenter school in North Newington, on the final day of term last year. He also celebrated midnight communion on Christmas Eve and Revd Canon John lead the Christmas morning service. Revd Neil celebrated at a special Communion service in the chapel for the first time at Broughton castle on New Year's day.

## Epwell

In early December St Anne's held a Christingle service with the collection being given to the Children's Society. Families were asked to make their own Christingle at home to bring along and the young people from the village were involved in prayers and readings. The church looked beautiful in the candle light and the PCC would like to thank the Wingfield-Digby family who kindly donated the Christmas tree.

The traditional Nativity service followed a different pattern this year. Instead of the children performing one of Dawn's plays, members of the congregation were invited to help construct the Nativity scene in the church by placing the figures in the stable whilst singing the appropriate carol.

Then, due to the horrid weather outside, the villagers who were expecting to sing carols around the Christmas tree in the square came and gathered in the church and sang a selection of carols accompanied by Andrew McHugh on the violin.



## Swalcliffe

**Christmas came and went: Swalcliffe Christmas Market** took place on Sat 4<sup>th</sup> December with over 25 different stalls and a steady throng of people browsing and stocking up on Christmas gifts and goodies. The stunning result was that we made a total surplus of £3,421. This has been shared between the PCC, to help fund ongoing maintenance and repairs of the church, the Village Hall fund and two local charities: Asylum Welcome, which supports Afghan refugee families starting new lives in Oxfordshire, and The Branch Trust, a Chipping Norton based charity that provides a range of practical support to help local families in crisis. It was a superb team effort and sincere thanks go to everyone involved in making the market's comeback such a success.

Sadly, the difficult decision was made to cancel the much-anticipated Nativity performance in the face of the rapidly rising numbers of Omicron cases. A lot of effort had been put into preparations and rehearsals so it was a big disappointment for everyone, but plans will be revived for a reprise in 2022!

Undaunted, Swalcliffe still managed to muster some Christmas community spirit on 23<sup>rd</sup> December with Carols sung on the Green by torchlight, followed by mulled

wine and sausage rolls served outside the pub. Nearly 100 villagers attended.

The year ended with a romantic winter wedding held in the church on New Year's Eve. Isabel Boycott and her husband Oliver Prior exchanged their vows in front of over 130 guests. The church looked beautiful lit with hundreds of candles and they emerged from the church to a mass of sparklers glittering in the darkness providing light, hope and happiness for 2022! (Photo on front cover).

## Sibford

Greetings from Sibford wishing you all a healthy and happy 2022

As in all parishes there have been many and varied events for the Advent and Christmas season, at Holy Trinity we hosted the Skeptics with their folk-fusion twist to familiar Christmas carols.

The Christmas Tree Festival was very well received and supported by village groups and schools. There were nine trees in total, the Historic Society provided a Wartime tree, all handmade decorations; Sibford Primary school produced their trees by using twigs from school grounds, making and decorating their own clay decorations. Sibford School involved their pupils in making thoughtful messages as their decorations; Jo

Huckvale introduced us to International Cooperation in Space with planets, International Space Station models and attractive doves. Other contributors were Sibford Lunch Club; Photography Club, Horti Club, Sibford Players and Mums and Tots. We are looking forward to this event again this year. All groups and organisations in The Sibfords are welcome to join in.

The calendars are still on sale in church. We have heard that some have travelled to many distant places including Idaho, USA, New Zealand and Germany.

We held a Christingle Service which was well supported and enjoyed and raised £135 for The Children's Society. The Carol Service was also well supported which at this time of uncertainty and restrictions was very encouraging to all including the Benefice choir and Revd. Neil.



## POLLY BOXES

Thank you to all those who donated gift boxes to adult homeless and needy in Banbury which were distributed via Polly. Twenty boxes were delivered to Polly and once again she was overwhelmed and greatly appreciative of your support, showing God's love to those less fortunate.

There is always a need for tinned and dried foods, Polly feeds approximately 15 – 20 folks each day. With your help and that of other churches she can continue to do this.

**THANK YOU**

*'When I needed a neighbour, you were there'*

## Shutford

A Messy Church with Christingle in Shutford Village Hall on 11<sup>th</sup> December was enjoyed by all who attended. There were lots of crafts, including the making of Christingles, carols and refreshments.

The candle lit Carol Service on 19<sup>th</sup> December, in church, attracted a congregation of 42, the largest of the year. It was good to have families with children at both events. A donation of £140 has been given to the Children's Society from collections.

The church was beautifully decorated with greenery and flowers for Christmas with a tree in the churchyard again this year. Special thanks to everyone who donated and arranged the flowers.

## Tadmarton

A new year is here and there are 2 new projects underway, excluding the kitchen area, both in relation to the churchyard.

Jane Asser has kindly agreed to donate some adjoining land to extend the churchyard further along the back. This is not needed just yet but will certainly be in use within 10 years. That should give us enough time to deal with solicitors and the DAC!

We do not at present have a proper plan of the graves. We have now taken some drone photos which will enable us to create such a plan. It will not be easy as some of the gravestones have weathered badly. Perhaps we will be brushing up brass rubbing techniques.

**Happy Valentine's Day to you all on Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> February.** What a lovely way to start the week. May God's love flow on throughout the week, month, 2022!



# Service Timetable for February

Liturgical colour

Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> February <b>4th before Lent</b>	Tadmarton	11.00am	Benefice Eucharist	N.B.
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> February <b>3rd before Lent</b>	Sibford	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP	NB
	Shutford	9.30am	Holy Communion BCP	NB
	Sibford	9.30am	All Age Family service	Lay Led
	Swalcliffe	9.30am	Holy Communion	JT
	Epwell	9.45am	All Age Family service	Lay led
	Broughton	11.am	Holy Communion	NB
Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup> February <b>2nd before Lent</b>	Tadmarton	11am	Holy Communion	JT
	Sibford	9.30am	Holy Communion	JT
	Epwell	9.45am	Holy Communion	NB
	Broughton	11.00am	Holy Communion	JT
	Shutford	11.00am	All Age Family service	Lay led
	Tadmarton	11.00am	Holy Communion	NB
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> February <b>Next before Lent</b>	Swalcliffe	6.00pm	Evensong BCP	NB
	Shutford	9.30am	Holy Communion	GE
	Sibford	9.30am	Holy Communion BCP	NB
	Swalcliffe	9.30am	Holy Communion	DP
	Epwell	9.45am	Holy Communion	JT
	Broughton	11.00am	All Age Family service	JT
<b>Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March</b> <b>Ash Wednesday</b>	Tadmarton	11.00am	All Age Family service	NB
	Epwell	9.30am	<b>Holy Communion &amp; Imposition of Ashes</b>	NB
Sibford	7pm	<b>Holy Communion &amp; Imposition of Ashes</b>		

**Rector:** Rev'd Neil Bowler: 788005 **Associate Minister:** The Rev'd Canon John Tattersall (JT)

**Assisting Priests:** The Rev'd Dr David Pym (DP), The Rev'd Canon Glyn Evans (GE),

The Rev'd Canon John Whitwell (JW), Canon Christopher Hall (CH)

## Readings for February

Liturgical colour

6 <sup>th</sup> February 4 <sup>th</sup> before Lent	Isaiah 6: 1-8	1 Corinthians 15: 1 - 11	Luke 5: 1 - 11	
13 <sup>th</sup> February 3 <sup>rd</sup> before Lent	Jeremiah 1: 1 - 11	1 Corinthians 15: 12 - 20	Luke 6: 17 - 26	
20 <sup>th</sup> February 2 <sup>nd</sup> before Lent	Genesis 2: 4b-9,15-end	Revelations 4	Luke 8: 22 - 25	
27 <sup>th</sup> February Sunday next before Lent	Exodus 34: 29 - end	2 Corinthians 3: 12 - ch4: 2	Luke 9: 28 -36	
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> March</b> <b>Ash Wednesday</b>	Isaiah 58: 1 - 12	2 Corinthians 5: 20b - ch6:10	John 8: 1 - 11	

## Prayers

Are you managing to pursue your New Year's resolutions or are you struggling as the weeks pass by? Don't quit! Think on this, pray about it and pass these thoughts on to others.

Life is strange with its twists and turns, as every one of us sometimes learns and many a failure comes about when we might have won....had we stuck it out. Don't give up, though the pace seems slow - you may succeed with another go. Success is failure turned inside out, the silver tint in the cloud of doubt, and you never can tell how close you are - it may be near when it seems so far. So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit; it's when things seem worst that you must not quit.

God, grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, courage to change the things we can, and wisdom to know the difference. Amen

(Part of the Serenity Prayer attributed to Reinhold Neibuhr, 1892 – 1971)

## Apologies from the Editor

In the last edition I made rather a hash of things! Well we were running up to Christmas, 'running' being the appropriate word. I am sure none of you noticed the complete lack of Gospel readings in the reading list and that a Sunday of services in January was totally missed as well! How this got past three of us proof reading it, I don't know. I left poor Neil having to send out service and reading lists here there and everywhere but at least I kept him on his toes. 😊

More seriously, I do send my sincere apologies to the relatives of Rev'd Riddle whose dedication was entered incorrectly. This window in Tadmarton, whose photograph was included in the last edition, is dedicated to their relative Francis Edmund Riddle who died in the first world war on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 1915, aged 21yrs. To the many relatives who came to visit the church to see it, I do apologise for getting the names muddled. I look forward to having a look at the window next time I am in St. Nicholas Church, Tadmarton.



All best wishes to you all for a very safe and happy 2022. *Carolyn Koch de Gooreynd*

*Please send your news for the edition by  
Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2022  
Editor, Carolyn Koch de Gooreynd: [carolyn.kdeg@zen.co.uk](mailto:carolyn.kdeg@zen.co.uk)*